

Dover District Council

# BIODIVERSITY DUTY REPORT



1 January 2024 – 31 December 2025



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# 1. Introduction

## DEFINITION OF BIODIVERSITY

- 1.1 Biodiversity (biological diversity) is the variety of all life on Earth. It includes all species, such as animals, plants, fungi and microorganisms, and the natural systems that support them.
- 1.2 The UK's National Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 describes that: '*Biodiversity is key to all the processes that support life on Earth. We rely on it for our essential needs, like food, shelter, energy and medicine, as well as for the ecosystem services it provides, such as climate regulation, flood management, water purification, disease and pest control, and pollination*'.

## BACKGROUND

- 1.3 The Environment Act 2021 requires the Secretary of State to set a target to halt the decline in the abundance of species by 2030. Alongside this, the minister must prepare an [Environmental Improvement Plan](#) (EIP). The EIP was revised in December 2025 and sets out that the Government will work in partnership with local government, landowners, businesses, farmers, fishermen, environmental organisations, communities to deliver the EIP and restore nature.

In the EIP the statutory targets for England include:

- Halt the decline in species abundance by 2030
- Increase species abundance so that by 2042 it is greater than in 2022
- Restore or create in excess of 500,000 hectares of a range of wildlife-rich habitats outside protected sites by 2042
- Increase tree canopy and woodland cover to at least 16.5% of total land area by 2050.

Interim targets in the EIP include:

- Restore or create a total of 250,000 hectares of a range of wildlife-rich habitats outside of protected sites by December 2030
- By December 2030 50% of Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) features to have actions on track to achieve favourable condition
- Reduce the rate of establishment of invasive non-native species (INNS) by at least 50% by December 2030, compared to 2000 levels
- Increase England's tree canopy and woodland cover by 0.33% of land area by December 2030 from the 2022 baseline of 14.9%. (Equivalent to a net increase 43,000 hectares.)

- 1.4 Dover District Council (the council) has a legal obligation to consider what it can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity. This is known as the Biodiversity Duty which was established by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and strengthened by the Environment Act 2021.

- 1.5 The Council is required to take four key steps to meet its Biodiversity Duty:

- Consider what action it can take to conserve and enhance biodiversity when exercising its functions
- Determine which policies and specific objectives are appropriate to comply with the Duty
- Act to deliver our policies and achieve our objectives
- Publish biodiversity reports (at least every 5 years) on actions taken and future plans to conserve and enhance biodiversity

- 1.6 The Council identified the following objectives in its First Considerations Report in 2024:

**Objective 1 - Relevant external strategies:** To ensure Dover District Council contributes to the preparation of, and implementation of, the following relevant strategies: Local Nature Recovery Strategy; Species Conservation Strategies; and Protected Site Strategies.

**Objective 2 - Planning and Development including Biodiversity Net Gain:** To secure biodiversity conservation and enhancement through planning approvals, including Biodiversity Net Gain where appropriate.

**Objective 3 - Council Plans, Policies and Strategies:** To ensure biodiversity is considered within Council Plans, Policies and Strategies, decision-making and other internal processes, where relevant.

**Objective 4 - Council owned land and buildings:** To consider the potential for Council owned land and buildings to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

**Objective 5 - Partnerships, communities and volunteers:** To promote (and identify opportunities for) biodiversity in the Council's work with partnerships, communities and volunteers, including engaging with the public and other stakeholders to educate, advise and raise awareness of biodiversity.

## PURPOSE AND CONTENT OF THIS REPORT

1.7 This is the first biodiversity report for the period 1 January 2024 to 31st December 2025. It summarises the actions the Council has taken to conserve and enhance biodiversity, establishes a format for future reporting, and identifies objectives and actions for the next reporting period. The Biodiversity Duty is a whole council responsibility and is potentially relevant to all Council departments, activities and decision taking.

1.8 The Government has produced Guidance on what is required:

### ***What to include in your report***

*By law, your report must include:*

- *a summary of the action you've taken to comply with the biodiversity duty*
- *how you plan to comply with the biodiversity duty in the next reporting period*
- *any other information you consider appropriate*

*Reports from local planning authorities must also include the following biodiversity net gain (BNG) information:*

- *the actions you've carried out to meet BNG obligations*
- *details of BNG resulting, or expected to result, from biodiversity gain plans you've approved*
- *how you plan to meet BNG obligations in the next reporting period*

### ***Optional information***

*To further communicate steps you're taking to improve the environment, your report could also include:*

- *information about your authority*
- *your top achievements*
- *how you've considered relevant local nature recovery, protected site and species conservation strategies*

1.9 This report sets out:

- A summary of the natural and environmental assets in the district, and those which the Council manage or own
- Key achievements during the reporting period.
- A summary of the actions that have been completed to benefit biodiversity to meet the objectives agreed in 2024.
- Reporting requirements for the delivery of biodiversity net gain.
- Objectives and Actions for the next reporting period.

## THE DOVER DISTRICT

- 1.10 Dover is one of twelve local authority districts in Kent. Dover borders with Thanet to the north, Folkestone and Hythe to the southwest, and Canterbury to the northwest.
- 1.11 The district covers an area of 320 square kilometres and has around 32 kilometres of coast. Over a fifth of the district (22%) is designated part of the Kent Downs National Landscape. Three percent of the district is defined as Heritage Coast, centred on the famous white cliffs on either side of Dover.
- 1.12 The district is mostly rural, with two main urban areas, Dover and Deal, and two rural service centres, the medieval town of Sandwich and Aylesham. Dozens of villages and smaller settlements make up the rural area.
- 1.13 Dover District is home to natural assets of international, national and local significance, and supports most of the lowland habitat types found within Kent. There are numerous sites protected for their importance for the conservation of habitats and species. These include:
- Internationally designated sites, including Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's), Special Protection Area (SPA's) and Ramsar Sites
  - Nationally protected sites, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserves (NNR) and Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ's)
  - Locally Protected Sites, including Local Nature Reserves (LNR's) and Local Wildlife Sites (LWS's)
- 1.14 There are a range of important habitats in the Dover District, including an exceptional range of coastal habitats including habitats in the intertidal zone (littoral rock), cliffs which run along the high-water mark (supralittoral rock) and the coast which consists of mud, sand or shingle (supralittoral sediment). Other habitats include chalk grassland (Dover District includes nearly one quarter of Kents's chalk grassland habitat), fens, grazing marsh and maritime grassland, broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland, and ancient woodland. In addition, the River Dour and North and South Streams are chalk rivers which is a globally rare habitat.
- 1.15 The Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy was published in November 2025. It is now the main strategic framework for nature recovery. It sets out habitat priorities for nature recovery, and potential measures/actions to deliver them. It includes a list of priority species for the area.

## DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL (DDC)

- 1.16 The council owns or manages buildings, parks, gardens and other rural and urban open spaces, which are used for a variety of activities. As well as sport, recreation, historic buildings, offices, business and community functions, there is land owned and managed for nature conservation. Protected and designated sites owned and/or managed by the Council are as follows:
- Western Heights Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
  - Western Heights, Dover LWS (most of site owned by DDC)
  - Prince's Beachland LNR
  - High Meadow LNR (part of site owned by DDC)
  - Whinless Down LNR
  - Whinless Down and Long Wood LWS (part of site owned by DDC)
  - Kingsdown and Walmer Beach Local Wildlife Site (LWS)
  - Great Farthingloe Downs, Aycliff LWS (part of site owned by DDC)
  - Long Hill and Combe Hole, Dover LWS (part of site owned by DDC)
  - River Valley Woods, Dover LWS (part of site owned by DDC)
  - St James Charlton Cemeteries, Dover LWS (part of site owned by DDC)
  - St Radigund's Valley LWS (part of site owned by DDC)
  - Lime kiln / Long / Slead Wood ancient woodland (part of area owned by DDC)
  - The Knees and Disused Railway Line, Shepherdswell LWS (small part of site owned by DDC)

- Whitfield Down and Buckland Down LWS (part of site owned by DDC)
- Spinney Wood, Aylesham ancient woodland

1.17 The Corporate Plan provides the overarching strategic direction for the Council. There are five Strategic Priorities. Strategic Priority Three – Protecting our environment includes the aims to:

- Recognise the importance of the environment in the decisions we make
- Encourage a clean, green, and safe place to live, work, visit, learn and invest
- Support and engage the community to protect their environment.

1.19 The Council has declared a **Climate Change Emergency** and adopted a strategy and action plan to meet the target of Council operations being net zero by 2030. The natural environment is a key part of adapting to and mitigating the changing climate and the natural environment theme includes relevant actions, including developing/updating plans to encourage nature-based solutions and sustain/enhance biodiversity, tree and hedge planting to improve carbon sequestration, and maintenance of existing tree stock, biodiversity, and soil and carbon capture rich landscapes.

## SUMMARY OF KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Significant progress has been made against all objectives, but some key achievements include the following:

- The Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy was adopted in 2024. It identifies the importance of open space for delivering multifunctional benefits, including habitat connectivity. Habitat management in these spaces will be part of the council response to increasing biodiversity in the district.
- One habitat bank has been secured, and five habitat banks are in the process of being secured. This will deliver over 100ha of land in the district being managed to increase biodiversity and support nature recovery through the creation of habitats including native woodland, lowland meadow and calcareous grassland.
- Six biodiversity gain plans have been approved during the reporting period which secure a net gain of 1.5 area habitat units and 2.95 hedgerow units and 0.02 water course units.
- The White Cliffs Countryside Partnership (WCCCP) which is hosted at the council continues to manage wild spaces, inspire local communities, and reduce the climate impact.
- The SAMM officer has delivered numerous on-site engagement activities at, as well as wider outreach education.
- In 2025 Dover was awarded Gold<sup>1</sup> and named Category Winner in both the Large Coastal Town and Biodiversity categories in the Dover in Bloom project.
- Green Flags awarded at Kearsney Abbey, Russel Gardens, Fort Burgoyne and Samphire Hoe.
- A Management Plan for Kingsdown and Walmer Beach was approved in 2024.
- The Western Heights Project included numerous educational and community activities, including volunteer workdays and family wildlife walks.
- On-site enhancement projects including installation of timber bollards along Wellington Parade, Kingsdown to protect vegetation, refurbishment of Connaught Pond, and the creation of bridge crossings at Sandwich Town Walks to improve management of the waterways and create water vole habitat.

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<sup>1</sup> [Dover in Bloom 2025 - FUTURE FOUNDRY](#)

## 2. Progress and review of actions to benefit biodiversity

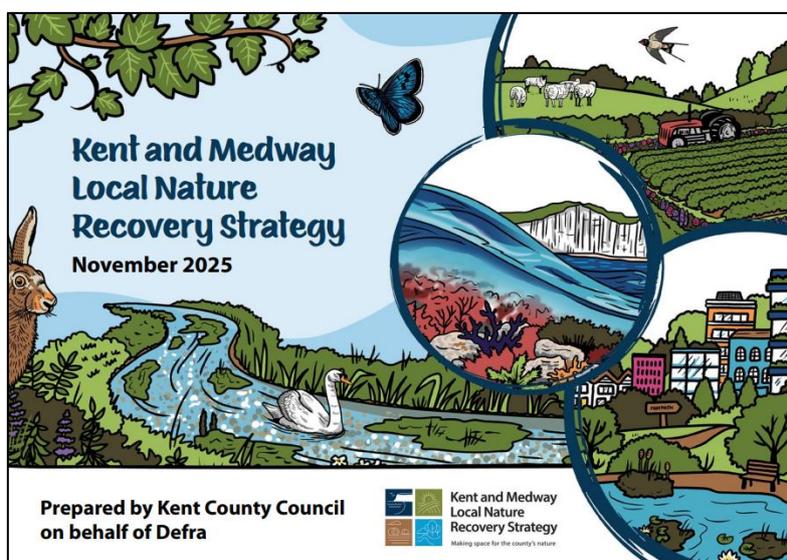
This section sets out the progress that has been made on the Council's Objectives and Actions that were agreed in June 2024. It also includes additional activities that have taken place in relation to each objective which benefit biodiversity, and sets the statutory reporting requirements for biodiversity net gain.

### OBJECTIVE 1: RELEVANT EXTERNAL STRATEGIES

**To ensure Dover District Council contributes to the preparation of, and implementation of, the following relevant strategies: Local Nature Recovery Strategy; Species Conservation Strategies; and Protected Site Strategies.**

**Action 1.1: To continue to be involved with and cooperate with KCC who are preparing the LNRS.**

The [Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#) was finalised and published in November 2025. The Council was a Supporting Authority in the preparation of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and was actively involved in setting priorities and mapping areas which could become of importance for biodiversity. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy sets a shared vision for Kent and Medway for nature recovery. It identifies potential actions for nature recovery and associated mapping helps to identify where actions are needed and where the greatest benefits can be achieved.



**Action 1.2: Further actions related to the LNRS will be identified once it is finalised in 2025, and incorporated into DDC strategies, where possible.**

The LNRS has only recently been published, so there has been no progress on this action yet, other than identification of a new Action (Action 4.1) to identify which land owned or managed by the Council is identified in the LNRS as an 'Area that Could become of Importance for Biodiversity'. Action 1.2 is retained in the action plan for the next reporting period.

**Action 1.3: DDC will co-operate and consider how to contribute to the implementation of Species Conservation and Protected Site Strategies**

Currently there are no Species Conservation Strategies and Protected Site Strategies being prepared for the Dover District, which are prepared by Natural England.

## **OBJECTIVE 2: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN**

**To secure biodiversity conservation and enhancement through planning approvals, including Biodiversity Net Gain where appropriate**

### **Action 2.1 Adopt emerging Local Plan in 2024**

The [Dover District Local Plan](#) was adopted in October 2024 with an objective 'to conserve or enhance the District's biodiversity and green infrastructure, including .....all designated wildlife sites, priority habitats and species and to enhance ecological connectivity between them, to create a coherent ecological network and delivering a net gain in biodiversity'.

A number of policies seek to deliver this objective, including:

- Policy SP13 – Protecting the District's Hierarchy of Designated Environmental Sites and Biodiversity Assets;
- Policy SP14 – Enhancing Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity;
- Policy CC8 - Tree Planting and Protection;
- Policy PM1 – Achieving High Quality Design, Place Making and the Provision of Design Codes
- Policy NE1 – Biodiversity Net Gain;
- Policy NE2 - Landscape Character and the Kent Downs AONB;
- Policy NE3 – Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA Mitigation and Monitoring Strategy;
- Policy NE6 – The River Dour

Strategic Policies SP13 (Protecting the District's Hierarchy of Designated Environmental Sites and Biodiversity Assets) and SP14 (Enhancing Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity) together form the basis of biodiversity protection and enhancement requirements for developments.

Local Plan Policy NE1 is a detailed policy on Biodiversity Net Gain. It adds a local emphasis to the implementation of BNG when planning applications are determined. As a result, when off-site biodiversity gain is proposed, the policy requires applicants to follow a locational hierarchy and first consider off-site locations in Dover district.

### **Action 2.2 To Adopt the Green Infrastructure Strategy and deliver Action Plan**

The Green Infrastructure Strategy was Adopted in June 2024. The Strategy focuses on six key outcomes relating to protected and restored nature; resilience to climate change; sustainable water management; improved health and wellbeing for all; sustainable places; and valued and healthy landscapes. Actions that will contribute to the achievement of these Key Outcomes are set out in the Action Plan and some have been reproduced as Biodiversity Duty Actions.

Delivery of the Action Plan is ongoing and will be included in the action plan for the next reporting period.

### **Action 2.3 Implement Core Action 1 of Green Infrastructure Strategy to Develop and implement Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document / Guidance.**

Initial drafting of BNG guidance has begun and will be produced / published in sections. Due to forthcoming changes to the mandatory BNG regime, some of the guidance will await the legislative amendments (expected no sooner than late spring 2026). The action is included in the action plan for the next reporting period. To date resources have been focused on developing internal processes.

### **Action 2.4 Implement Core Action 2 of Green Infrastructure Strategy to develop and implement biodiversity design code for new development.**

Initial drafting has commenced. The East Kent Design Code project has progressed through Stages 1 & 2 (baseline and vision) and is due to be completed in early 2026. Stage 3 on production of Design Codes is due to commence following this and the biodiversity design code is expected to form part of this.

**Action 2.5 To consider Biodiversity Net Gain information needs in a revised list of Local Validation Requirements for planning applications.**

Initial consideration has been given to the requirements. The production of validation checklists is being reviewed in 2026 to take into account proposed amendments to the NPPF. The action is included in the action plan for the next reporting period.

**Action 2.6. Continue training activity with Officers and Members**

Development Management Officers have attended training courses on understanding BNG and implementing internal BNG processes including validation for BNG, understanding the small sites metric, securing BNG, and discharging the deemed BNG condition. Councillors have received BNG training. This action is ongoing and will be included in the action plan for the next reporting period.

**Action 2.7 Monitor and review initial processes developed for managing considerations of BNG in the planning process, including level of support required externally from KCC Biodiversity**

Internal processes are in place and subject to ongoing review as BNG becomes more established and understanding grows.

To ensure sufficient capacity to address BNG and other ecological considerations in planning decisions, the Council has a service level agreement with KCC Ecological Advice Service for external ecological advice which will be renewed for 2026/27.

Monitoring and review of processes is necessary and ongoing, particularly with upcoming changes to the legislative framework, and will be included in the action plan for the next reporting period.

**Action 2.8 Update DDC website to provide guidance for applicants and developers**

BNG information and guidance is available on the council's website. This action is ongoing and will be included in the action plan for the next reporting period.

**Action 2.9 Review and develop monitoring processes for BNG, including developing a fee calculator to ensure costs of monitoring BNG are covered by development. Update Fees and Charges schedule.**

Monitoring processes for BNG that is secured by the Council have been developed, including a schedule of fees to cover the costs to the Council of undertaking monitoring the delivery of BNG. This has been set out in the Council's Fees and Charges Schedule as part of the Council's annual budget setting.

**Action 2.10 Undertake review of enforcement and develop new processes and procedures where necessary**

No progress on this action has been taken. The action is included in the action plan for the next reporting period. The action is updated to specify that this action related to BNG.

**Action 2.11 Make preparations to enable the Council to enter into S106 agreements for prospective Habitat Banks to deliver off-site BNG in the District, including developing new internal processes to manage this and criteria to assess proposals**

This action is complete. Habitat Bank Criteria and internal processes for securing habitat banks have been established and implemented to ensure due diligence for securing off-site BNG in habitat banks with s106 legal agreements.

One habitat bank (Chalksole Habitat Bank) was secured by legal agreement over the reporting period and there are five additional proposed habitat banks in advanced discussions and expected to be secured during 2026.

Chalksole Habitat Bank will deliver habitats including broadleaved woodland that connects two areas of SSSI ancient woodland, and lowland meadow and calcareous grassland that will contribute to the East Kent Downs Landscape Recovery Project, making significant contributions to nature recovery.

Including the habitat banks coming forward, over 100ha of land within the district will be legally secured for habitat creation and enhancement.

**Details of Biodiversity Net Gain resulting, or expected to result, from approved biodiversity gain plans**

This section sets out the reporting requirements of the Local Planning Authority regarding biodiversity net gain.

While at this early stage, relatively few developments have an approved biodiversity gain plan<sup>2</sup>, the data is presented in Appendix 1 using the DEFRA template. The Defra reporting output at Appendix 1 is a technical data report, but key information for this reporting period (1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025): is summarised in the table below:

Category	Number of applications <sup>3</sup>
Total number of planning permissions granted that require BNG	47
Total number of planning permissions granted where a BNG exemption applies	858
Total number of biodiversity gain plans <sup>4</sup> approved in the reporting period	6

**Additional actions that have been achieved under Objective 2 (Planning and Development) that contribute to conserving and enhancing biodiversity**

The Council is one of only a minority of local planning authorities to have an ‘in-house’ ecologist, who has led on and shaped the Council’s approach to the implementation of mandatory biodiversity net gain, setting processes in place and delivering training to Council officers. Ecological advice is provided to help the Council to address and consider biodiversity impacts and opportunities within planning decisions, ensuring Government guidance, planning policy and legislation relating to ecological matters are taken-into-account. To meet the level of demand for ecological input to planning applications, external ecological advice is also provided by Kent Country Council Ecological Advice Service.

The Council is represented on various external bodies, including: Sandwich & Pegwell Bay National Nature Reserve Steering Group, North Kent Marine Protected Area Management Group, Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership Steering Group and the East Kent Catchment Improvement Partnership.

<sup>2</sup> The Mycelia software allows detailed interrogation of all the biodiversity gains proposed. When a Biodiversity Gain Plan is approved for the pre-commencement deemed condition, the agreed target habitats can be used to fulfil DEFRA’s suggested quantitative BNG reporting.

<sup>3</sup> These are subject to change due to ongoing data cleansing to prepare BNG information.

<sup>4</sup> Biodiversity gain plans are required in the deemed BNG pre-commencement condition to provide full details of how BNG requirements will be met.

The LPA continue to consider biodiversity impacts and opportunities within planning decisions, including implementation of local plan policy and mandatory biodiversity net gain (BNG).

The [Infrastructure Funding Statement \(IFS\)](#) reports on financial and non-financial obligations secured through S106 agreements. This includes obligations for Special Protection Area (SPA) Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMMS), open space and a variety of Green Infrastructure biodiversity enhancements specific to individual sites/applications

[The Authority Monitoring Report \(AMR\)](#) reports on specific indicators set out in the Local Plan, including items such as Designated Environment Sites, the condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Air Quality and Quality of the River Dour:

- Strategic Policy SP13 aims to conserve and enhance the district's important natural landscapes and water environments, to ensure these assets can continue to be experienced and valued by residents and visitors and are protected from inappropriate development. Part of the district is covered by Kent Downs National Landscape.
- Most of the district's SSSI units are in 'favourable' or 'unfavourable recovering' condition.
- Air quality is monitored in policy NE4. The Council are part of the Kent Air Quality Partnership with the aim to work towards improving the quality of Kent's air.
- Policy NE6 sets out specific requirements for applications within the area of the River Dour Corridor to consider the important ecosystem of the chalk stream. This is to ensure there are no adverse impacts on water quality.

## OBJECTIVE 3: COUNCIL PLANS, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

To ensure biodiversity is considered within council plans, policies and strategies, decision-making and other internal processes, where relevant.

### **Action 3.1 As Council's Plan and strategies are reviewed, consideration is given to biodiversity and opportunities for enhancement.**

This action has been successfully met and will be retained in the action plan, with an amendment to refer to 'plans, policies and strategies'. In addition to the Dover District Local Plan and Green Infrastructure Strategy which are reported against Objective 2, the following plans and strategies which deliver benefits to biodiversity have been adopted / published during 2024/5:

The **Great Mongeham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan** was formally adopted in October 2025. The document (which was prepared by the council in collaboration with the Great Mongeham Society) recognises the value of trees and hedgerows for enhancing biodiversity and wildlife opportunities, encourages the retention and active management of trees in the Conservation Area and gives advice on the planting new trees. It identifies and aims to safeguard significant trees, provides information on Tree Preservation Orders and the protections for trees in the Conservation Area.

**The Dover Local Cycling and Walking Strategy (LCWIP)** was published in December 2024. The LCWIP identifies a network plan for walking and cycling with identified preferred cycling routes and walking zones for further development. The scope of the project excluded any on-the-ground survey / investigations, but future design phases of the project will seek to secure green infrastructure (with reference to LNRS) in terms of conserving and enhancing biodiversity and habitat connectivity benefits in particular. This is added as an Action to this report

The **Archaeology of Dover** SPD was Adopted in January 2026. This document does not refer to, nor take account of, biodiversity. The overarching Dover District Heritage Strategy (which is referred to in the document), however, provides guidance on the historic landscape and the value of trees and hedgerows to historic landscape pattern, boundaries and lanes. It recognises that trees can have an historic significance but can also have an impact on buried archaeology.

The **Beach Hut Policy** was published in 2025. This policy's main aim is to continue to provide a popular, accessible amenity that enables residents and visitors to enjoy the beaches and coastline safely. It will be delivered alongside the Kingsdown & Walmer Beach Local Wildlife Site Management Plan 2024- 2029 (approved by Cabinet October 2024), which aims to conserve and enhance the rare, vegetated shingle habitat, and raise awareness about its importance with residents and visitors alike.

The **Deal Beach Management** Plan was approved on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024. It considered environmental implications and makes a commitment to consult or notify Natural England and the Marine Management Organisation of any future scheduled works.

The **Air Quality Action Plan 2024 – 2028** was submitted to Defra prior to this reporting period. The plan does not have a biodiversity focus, but the assessment of environmental implications in the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024 Council report recognised that air quality and climate are interconnected because the chemical species that lead to a degradation in air quality are normally co-emitted with greenhouse gases.

### **Action 3.2 Consider how information can be shared across the Council and training and education for Councillors and Council employees can be provided in relation to the Duty.**

This action has been achieved in part. The Planning Policy Team has shared information about the Biodiversity Duty and has met with some managers within each service to explain the Duty and discuss ways in which biodiversity can be considered when delivering services. The Action will be retained and amended for the Human Resources team to explore opportunities for staff training.

Together with the communications team they will also provide short on-line staff noticeboard posts to improve understanding of the biodiversity duty.

For the next reporting period Councillor training will be investigated, potentially in combination with an update on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

**Action 3.3 To consider the benefit of including a requirement for high-level assessment of biodiversity conservation and potential for enhancement within decision reports, to embed within decision making.**

From April 2026 committee reports will include a requirement to consider biodiversity. The relevant heading of the report will read '*Climate Change, Biodiversity Duty and other Environmental Implications*' and guidance for completing the report will refer to the need to '*confirm that biodiversity conservation and enhancement has been considered, and summarise any opportunities identified*'.

**Action 3.4 Each department, where relevant to their operations, to undertake consideration and where relevant propose actions for biodiversity and enhancement, including reviewing other internal Council processes which could contribute.**

This action has been achieved. The following services have been supported with meetings and information and have considered what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity:

- Human Resources, Payroll and Corporate Communications
- Place and Growth (Regeneration, projects, economic development, town centres, business support, western heights, venues and visitor services, community development, museums)
- Port Health and Environmental Services (Environmental health, port health, public protection, private sector housing, environmental protection)
- Finance and Investment (accountancy, finance, procurement, parking)
- Housing
- Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside (Park and open spaces, horticulture, natural environment, SAMM, waste services)
- Property Assets (estates, engineers, surveyors, tradesmen, facilities, caretaker, property assets)
- Planning and Development (Development Management, Planning Policy, Planning Enforcement, Heritage Natural Environment, Climate Change, Land Charges, Building Control)

The following services will be met for further detailed discussions in 2026. These will include:

- Corporate Services and Democracy, Legal and Licencing, Technology and Resilience, part of Environmental Protection

Each service reported activities which contributed to conserving and enhancing biodiversity, and the following sets out those which are in addition to the original objectives and actions:

- The PIF (procurement initiation form) has been updated to include a reminder to consider what actions/requirements may be included in tender documents to conserve and enhance biodiversity (**Procurement Team**)
- Several capital projects to improve water quality to several water bodies in Council ownership, namely the refurbishment of Connaught Park Pond and the Sandwich Town Walks with the creation of new bridge crossings to enable improved management of the waterways with the creation of water vole habitat being included in the scope of works (**Parks and Open Spaces**).

- In 2025 Dover was awarded Gold<sup>5</sup> and named Category Winner in both the Large Coastal Town and Biodiversity categories in the Dover in Bloom project (**Tourism and Town Centres**).
- Staff resources have been increased with the appointment of an additional Tree Officer post to support the management of trees, tree planting, and development of a tree strategy. The department has planted over 300 trees in 2024/25 and further tree planting is scheduled for 2026 (**Parks and Open Spaces**).
- Kearsney Abbey and Russell Gardens were awarded the Green Flag Award in 2025 for the fifth year running. This scheme refers to conservation and management of natural features (**Parks and Open Spaces**).
- Installation of timber bollards along Wellington Parade Kingsdown to protect vegetation (**Property Assets**).
- Clearance works have been undertaken along Walmer Beach to tidy up existing boat plots and this work is ongoing. This included engagement with plot holders and rubbish clearance 'amnesty' days (**Property Assets**).
- Active management of seafronts to prevent cars parking on beach areas (**Property Assets**).
- In relation to housing management, the **Housing Operations** team have taken steps to tackle fly tipping of commercial waste on some estates. They have also been working with Waste Services to encourage tenants, particularly in flats, to recycle their waste, and they are involved in a project to increase the amount of food waste which is collected from flats. This has a high-level benefit for biodiversity, as does the inclusion of air source heat pumps and PV panels on new developments. They ensure the Parks team have an input into all landscaping design work.

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<sup>5</sup> [Dover in Bloom 2025 - FUTURE FOUNDRY](#)

## **OBJECTIVE 4: COUNCIL OWNED LAND AND BUILDINGS**

**To consider the potential for council owned land and buildings to conserve and enhance biodiversity**

**Action 4.1 When preparing the next Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, identify any areas of Council owned parks, amenity open spaces, cemeteries and closed churchyards that would be suitable for implementation of site-specific management plans to meet objectives within the KCC Local Nature Recovery Strategy and / or Natural England (NE) Species Conservation Strategies and Protected Site Strategies.**

Preparation of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy is expected to start in 2027. The Action will continue to be included in the Action Plan for the next reporting period.

**Action 4.2 Continue to work with local stakeholders in identifying additional areas of Council owned amenity grassland that can be managed using fewer cuts per year, to encourage greater biodiversity.**

The Parks & Open Spaces team continues to explore opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements into its open space. Over the past several years mowing frequencies have been reduced (to encourage wildflowers) at certain sites including Kearsney Abbey, Connaught Park, Walmer Seafront, Victoria Park and most recently last year, the Council Offices. The parks department have identified further sites for 2026 to be included on a reduced mowing regime, namely the Mill Wall on the Town Walks of Sandwich.

In August 2025, after the grass was cut at the Council offices, a staff event was held in which volunteers helped to rake the grass. This helps to support wildflowers by reducing enrichment of the soil, and staff were able to learn about the management of this habitat.

**Action 4.3 When preparing the proposed tree strategy, consider opportunities for promoting biodiversity through management of trees on Council owned land, e.g. when possible, using a range of native species in any planting schemes.**

Preparation of the Tree Policy is expected to start in 2026. The Action will continue to be included in the Action Plan for the next reporting period.

**Action 4.4 Carry out an audit of site-specific management plans of protected and designated sites in Dover District Council ownership, with the intention to identify any which require reviewing and/or where new management plans are required to increase positive conservation management**

A Management Plan for Kingsdown and Walmer Beach was approved in October 2024. Implementation of the proposed management plan will help to promote biodiversity by supporting local and declining native species. This Action will continue to be included in the Action Plan for the next reporting period.

**Action 4.5 Undertake a review of Council landholding (including waterways) to assess potential suitability for providing off-site BNG funded through the sale of BNG units to developers.**

An initial study for the potential of 2 council owned sites to deliver BNG units has been carried out. Potential changes to the number of applications that will have to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain may have an impact on the viability of a Council owned Habitat Bank. An action to scope a feasibility study to identify suitable process for identifying habitat banks on Council landholdings in the District has been added for the next period.

**Action 4.6 White Cliffs Countryside Partnership to continue working to protect, enhance and promote biodiversity on the seven nature reserves it manages in Dover District.**

This Action is met and a summary of activities is set out under Objective 5. The Action will be retained as an ongoing action.

**Action 4.7 Review current processes in relation to maintenance of buildings and sites to ensure biodiversity is being considered where necessary.**

The timescale for achieving the Action is amended to 2027.

**Action 4.8 Consider potential for small scale habitat enhancements on Council owned buildings.**

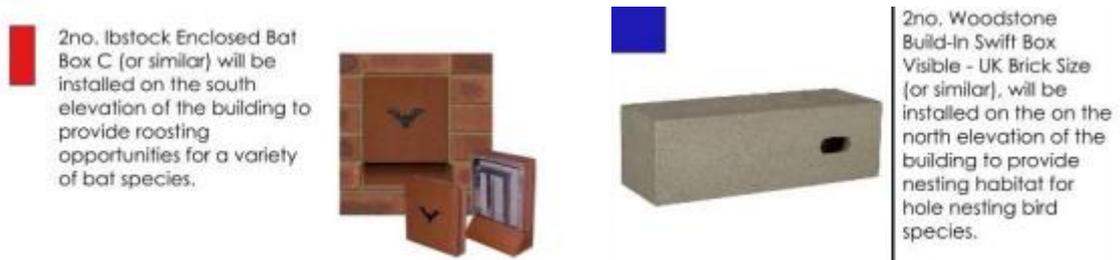
This action will be retained as an ongoing action in the next reporting period. An additional specific action is added to consider the addition of biodiversity enhancements when the new roof for the Dover Museum is designed/ constructed in 2026.

**Action 4.9 Ensure biodiversity net gain is embedded in the early stages of new project delivery.**

This action is met and will be retained as an ongoing action. The Council has identified that the Biodiversity Duty should be considered at early stages of project planning. This is now formalised in the internal project recording (the Project Concept Form) and the wording of a requirement to consider environmental benefits will be discussed.

Internal training and discussions have taken place with relevant services responsible for Council owned land and buildings, including Major Projects, Parks, Open Spaces, Countryside, Property Assets, Strategic Housing and Housing Development. Housing development and other major projects consider biodiversity impacts and mitigation from the early design stages and through project development and design, including considering opportunities for biodiversity enhancement and for delivery biodiversity net gain. For example:

- The Beacon Project (Bench Street). The mandatory BNG requirements will be achieved by planting trees and through the purchase of statutory watercourse units (bankside habitat is an existing road and pavement not suitable for habitat enhancement or creation). Integrated bat and bird boxes will provide features for biodiversity. The landscape masterplan also includes raised planters, and a landscape buffer with shrub planting and rain garden. A lighting design strategy will identify features around the site which have the potential to be used by bats and lighting installation will be installed to avoid impacts.
- Tides Leisure Centre Redevelopment. This development will achieve the requirements for biodiversity net gain, and the landscape strategy plan submitted with the application identifies trees to be retained, shrub and hedgerow planting, and grassland enhancement.
- Housing development at Land North off Military Road, Dover. This scheme is currently under construction and includes ecological enhancements such as swift boxes, bee bricks and bat boxes.



## **OBJECTIVE 5: PARTNERSHIPS, COMMUNITIES AND VOLUNTEERS**

**To promote (and identify opportunities for) biodiversity in the Council's work with partnerships, communities and volunteers, including engaging with the public and other stakeholders to educate, advise and raise awareness of biodiversity**

### **Action 5.1 Existing White Cliffs Countryside Partnership activities to continue**

The White Cliffs Countryside Partnership is a not-for-profit organisation serving the districts of Dover and Folkestone & Hythe. Since 1989, WCCP has been dedicated to preserving and enhancing the distinctive countryside and coastline of the local area for the benefit of both wildlife and people. WCCP manage the following 9 nature reserves in the District: Coombe Hole (LWS); High Meadow (LNR); Kingsdown and Walmer Beach (LWS); Samphire Hoe (SSSI); Shakespeare Cliff (SSSI); South Foreland Valley (SSSI); Spinney Wood; Western Heights (LNR, LWS) and Whinless Down (LNR, LWS).

Activities undertaken between April 2024 and January 2026 are too numerous to list, but include the following:

- Ongoing management nine nature reserves across the district for wildlife and people. With the exception of Spinney Wood, we use conservation grazing with cattle and ponies to manage the chalk grassland and scrub habitats. Other management includes scrub clearance and management and dealing with invasive species, including invasive non-native species.
- Conducted 191 wildlife surveys.
- Planted 455 trees.
- Restored two ponds.
- Samphire Hoe (owned by Eurotunnel and managed by WCCP) was awarded the 2025/2026 Green Flag Award.
- Fort Burgoyne (owned by The Land Trust and managed by WCCP) was awarded the 2025/2026 Green Flag Award.
- Participating in local projects to deliver more for biodiversity, including English Heritage's Reaching Greater Heights project and the Geopark.
- Working on river restoration projects for both the Upper and Lower Dour.
- Volunteers are key to the work undertaken to support nature recovery and volunteers help to manage nature reserves, litter pick, record key species and even carry out welfare checks on livestock.
- 324 Conservation Volunteer Tasks.
- Over 2,800 volunteer days.
- Three Trainee Rangers, two of which have gone on to work full-time for the partnership.

Community involvement opportunities included the following:

- 128 school groups have attended sessions at Samphire Hoe, Fort Burgoyne and on the River Dour, engaging 3,375 pupils.
- Over 300 engagement events, ranging from rock-pooling to wood carving
- 11 corporate groups have volunteered.
- One interpretation panel has been installed

### **Action 5.2 Consider, with the Communities and Communications teams how to engage the public to educate, advise and raise awareness of biodiversity.**

This action has been completed and will be changed in the Action Plan to an 'ongoing' action, stating that the *'communities and communications teams will continue to engage the public and raise awareness of biodiversity'*.

Corporate Communications team have used social media networks to tell people about nature conservation activities undertaken by the council. This included WCCP events and educational courses for the River Dour, and community litter picking through the Great British Spring Clean.

They also publicised relevant consultations, including a consultation on the Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan. They will continue to use social media networks to share details about nature conservation activities and to publicise relevant consultations and help to promote relevant events. They intend to continue to provide appropriate support to teams across the council to promote new and existing initiatives and to communicate the work of teams across the council to support biodiversity. This includes the production of signs, posters, graphics and a range of design services.

The Tourism team have also promoted nature reserves and nature-based events, and on their website they have information about for example, responsible dog walking in sensitive areas

### **Action 5.3 Continue to support the work of the Kent Downs AONB unit to identify opportunities for improvements to nature in the Kent Downs National Landscape.**

This year, the council contributed to the preparation of guidance documents which have a biodiversity conservation and enhancement consequence. These included including helping to scope the timetable for review of the Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan review, commenting on a revised Setting Position Statement, and most recently assisting with the review of a Renewable Energy Position Statement.

National Parks and National Landscapes have been targeted by Government to assist in delivering the national 30x30 ambitions<sup>6</sup>. Where landholdings fall within the Kent Downs National Landscape, the Council is identifying potential projects that will support these ambitions.

The council has formally supported the Cross Channel Geopark UNESCO application.

### **Additional actions that have been achieved under Objective 5 (Partnerships, Communities and Volunteers) that contribute to conserving and enhancing biodiversity**

*English Heritage's 'Reaching Greater Heights' & Dover District Council's 'Western Heights Heritage and Regeneration' projects.*

The Western Heights Project has included the following activities that contributed to biodiversity:

- Bat walks: Educating and raising awareness of Bat species that inhabit the area.
- Bat Surveys: Ensuring areas of the monument are not used during hibernation periods.
- Volunteer workdays for site management: In advance of workdays the team take advice from WCCP before any vegetation clearance to ensure the correct work is completed at the correct time of year to minimise disruption to wildlife. Considerate methods of vegetation clearance have been encouraged, and this includes purchasing and providing training with scythes.
- Wildlife walks: Involving young people in understanding wildlife species that live in the Western Heights area, how to enjoy wildlife safely with the minimum disturbance. This included family events such as a 'Bug Hunt' (August 2025), 'Beautiful Butterflies (August 2025) and a visit from White Cliffs Primary School Eco Group, a dusk wildlife walk, and a Halloween trail.

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<sup>6</sup> Agreed at the UN Biodiversity Summit (COP15) in 2022. The Government's commitment to this international target is enshrined within the [Environmental Improvement Plan](#)



**Photograph: Western Heights Bat Walk – May 2025**

*Strategic Access Mitigation and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) for Sandwich Bay*

In April 2023, the council finalised the [Strategic Access and Monitoring Strategy \(SAMMS\)](#) for Sandwich Bay setting out the approach to mitigate the impact of new housing development in the vicinity of the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Special Protection Area (SPA). The strategy aims to encourage positive and responsible coastal behaviours. An officer has been appointed to help implement the strategy. Partnership working is key to delivering the strategy aims to encourage positive and responsible coastal behaviours to avoid disturbance to habitats and protected species and monitor and manage potential disturbance. Connections are made with several nature conservation organisations, including Birdwise East Kent, Kent Wildlife Trust, Natural England and Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory. Links will continue to be developed with the community, prepare educational material and continue partnerships with nature conservation organisations.

A key aspect of the SAMM Officer's role is to deliver on-site engagement and wider outreach and education. A [Monitoring Report](#) has been published to cover the progress between April 2024 to March 2025 and activities have continued since that was published and include:

- On-site engagement with the public at Sandwich Bay, including conversations about the project and its aims.
- Intervention when recreation activity (e.g. drone flying) causes disturbance.
- Attended meetings with the Bird Wise East Kent (BWEK) Steering Group, the Pegwell and Sandwich Bay National Nature Reserve (NNR) Steering Group, and the North East Kent Marine Protected Area (NEKMPA) Advisory and Management Group meetings.
- Sharing best practice with Birdwise East Kent SAMM and engagement officers, and the Kent Wildlife Trust Protected Area Warden for Sandwich Bay.
- Supporting KWT's International Women's Day walk at Pegwell Bay and a joint IWD walk at Sandwich Bay with the Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory (SBBI) and KWT. Hosted a joint guided walk with BWEK at Betteshanger Park.
- Supported the Deal Sandown Castle Pirates Picnic Event

- Collaborated on events with SBBO AND KWT including two days of events for National Marine Week in August 2025.
- Introductory posts for both the SAMM Officer and Sandwich Bay were put on social media and an ongoing social media presence has continued.

## KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES WITH RECOMMENDATIONS

Through considering what the Council has done and how it can meet the duty in the future, the following challenges and opportunities have been identified which have informed future actions:

- **Understanding:** - Limited understanding among those who are not experts in the importance of biodiversity and the issues that biodiversity is facing can put barriers or delays to achieving benefits for biodiversity. Training is therefore identified as a continued action.
- **Identifying opportunities for biodiversity enhancement on council owned land and buildings:** The Council will identify which of its land holdings are identified on LNRS mapping. This will be disseminated to all services and will help the Council to identify the best opportunities for enhancement when preparing strategies, policies, site management plans and projects.
- **Pressure on council budgets:** Partnership working, and efforts to secure external funding have been effective, but more can be achieved within existing budgets. Officers should continue to identify 'small wins' for biodiversity and training should help with this. Small wins are cumulative, should be celebrated and can form a valuable point of education for the community. Examples include bee/bat/bird boxes, a hedgehog tunnel or the selection of a bedding plant known to be enjoyed by pollinators.
- **Biodiversity Monitoring and Reporting:** This needs to be improved across all services (other than development management). A simple recording system will be provided, and this will help produce the biodiversity report in future years. Training on providing data to the Kent and Medway Biological records centre will also be provided.
- **Climate change:** This is significant challenge which disrupts habitats, increases extinction rates and causes a decline in ecosystems services (such as food production and clean water). Activities to mitigate and adapt to climate change will help address biodiversity loss. Similarly, biodiversity is a natural defence against climate change and actions relating to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, Green Infrastructure and community education are relevant.

### 3. Biodiversity Duty Action Plan for 2026 to 2030

Key objectives (and actions) to fulfil the biodiversity duty over the next 5 years are set out in the table below.

Proposed Biodiversity Duty Objective	Updated actions Completed actions are summarised in the main report	Timescales	Department/service responsible Resource implications
<b>Objective 1</b> <b>Relevant external strategies</b> <b>To ensure Dover District Council contributes to the preparation of, and implementation of, the following relevant strategies:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)</b></li> <li>• <b>Species Conservation Strategies</b></li> <li>• <b>Protected site strategies</b></li> </ul>	<b>1.1</b> To continue to be involved with and cooperate with KCC (Making Space for Nature Team) who are preparing guidance on the implementation of the LNRS.	2026 / 2027	Planning and Development
	<b>1.2</b> Further actions related to the LNRS will be identified and incorporated into DDC strategies, where possible.	Ongoing	Planning and Development,
	<b>1.3</b> To work collaboratively with KCC and the Kent Nature Partnership to deliver LNRS biodiversity priorities.	Ongoing	All
	<b>1.4</b> Dover District Council will cooperate and consider how to contribute to the implementation of species and protected site strategies, where relevant.	TBC (subject to NE timescales)	Planning and Development
<b>Objective 2</b> <b>Planning and Development including Biodiversity Net Gain:</b> <b>To secure biodiversity conservation and enhancement through planning approvals, including Biodiversity Net Gain where appropriate.</b>	<b>Local Plan Actions</b>  <b>2.1</b> Monitor the implementation of nature/countryside policies in the Authority Monitoring Report.	Annually	Planning and Development
	<b>Green Infrastructure Strategy Actions</b>  <b>2.2</b> To deliver Green Infrastructure Strategy Action Plan	Ongoing	Planning and Development
	<b>2.3</b> Implement Core Action 1 of Green Infrastructure Strategy Action 1: Develop and implement BNG Supplementary Planning Guidance / guidance	2026	Planning and Development

Proposed Biodiversity Duty Objective	Updated actions Completed actions are summarised in the main report	Timescales	Department/service responsible Resource implications
	<p><b>2.4</b> Implement Core Action 2 of Green Infrastructure Strategy: Develop and Implement Biodiversity Design Code for new development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify working group partners</li> <li>• Prepare first draft of code for consultation</li> </ul> <p>Implementation of this action will need to respond to the timetable emerging from the East Kent Design Code project</p>	2026/ 2027	Planning and Development
	<p><b>2.5</b> Future design phases of the Local Cycling and Walking Strategy will consider (with reference to LNRS) biodiversity conservation and enhancement and habitat connectivity in particular.</p>	Ongoing	Planning and Development
	<p><b>Biodiversity New Gain and Development Management Actions</b></p> <p><b>2.6</b> To consider Biodiversity Net Gain information needs in a revised list of Local Validation Requirements for planning applications.</p>	2026 / 2027	Planning and Development
	<p><b>2.7</b> Continue training activity with Officers and Members (BNG).</p>	Ongoing	Planning and Development
	<p><b>2.8</b> Monitor and review processes developed for managing considerations of BNG in the planning process, including level of support required externally from KCC Biodiversity</p>	Ongoing	Planning and Development
	<p><b>2.9</b> Update DDC website to provide guidance for applicants and developers</p>	Ongoing	Planning and Development
	<p><b>2.10</b> Continue developing monitoring processes for BNG.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Planning and Development</p> <p>Review of any further resource requirements to be carried out through actions</p>
	<p><b>2.11</b> Undertake review of enforcement (in regard to BNG) and develop new processes and procedures where necessary</p>	2026 / 2027	Planning and Development

Proposed Biodiversity Duty Objective	Updated actions Completed actions are summarised in the main report	Timescales	Department/service responsible Resource implications
	<b>2.12</b> Report on details of BNG resulting, or expected to result, from Biodiversity Gain Plans	Ongoing	Planning and Development
<b>Objective 3</b> <b>Council Plans, Policies and Strategies</b>  <b>To ensure biodiversity is considered within Council Plans, Policies and Strategies, decision-making and other internal processes, where relevant.</b>	<b>3.1</b> As Council's Plan, policies and strategies are reviewed, consideration should be given to biodiversity conservation and opportunities for enhancement. Strategies and Policies being reviewed (or soon to be reviewed) include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facility Strategy;</li> <li>• Play Areas Strategy</li> <li>• Parks and Open Spaces Strategy</li> <li>• Parks Management Plans</li> <li>• Tree Strategy</li> <li>• Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment guidance.</li> <li>• Air Quality Strategy</li> <li>• Biodiversity Net Gain guidance.</li> <li>• Design Codes, including Biodiversity Design Code</li> <li>• Development Contributions guidance</li> <li>• Affordable Housing guidance</li> <li>• Events Policy.</li> <li>• Asset Management Strategy</li> <li>• Boat Plot Policy</li> <li>• Sustainable Procurement Statement / policy</li> <li>• Design Phases of LCWIP</li> </ul>	2026 and ongoing	Heads of Service
	<b>3.2</b> Consider how training and education needs for Councillors and Council employees in relation to the Duty. In particular the following actions have been identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the potential for a short compulsory training for staff</li> <li>• To provide on-line 'staff noticeboard' posts to improve understanding of the Biodiversity Duty</li> <li>• Investigate member training, potentially alongside an update on the publication of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.</li> </ul>	2026 and ongoing	Planning and Development, and Human Resources
	<b>3.3</b> To consider the benefit of including a requirement for high-level assessment of biodiversity conservation and potential for enhancement within decision reports, to embed within decision making.	April 2026	CMT

Proposed Biodiversity Duty Objective	Updated actions Completed actions are summarised in the main report	Timescales	Department/service responsible Resource implications
	<p><b>3.4</b> Each department, where relevant to their operations, to undertake consideration and where relevant propose actions for biodiversity and enhancement, including reviewing other internal Council processes which could contribute.</p>	Ongoing	All
	<p><b>3.5</b> Ensure biodiversity considerations are discussed when drafting the tender contact (and considering appointments) for the Council's pest control provider.</p>	2026	Environmental Protection
	<p><b>3.6</b> Review of ongoing Mosquito monitoring and treatment in Sandwich to give consideration to biodiversity.</p>	2026	Environmental Protection
	<p><b>3.7</b> To explore the best way for all council services to record Actions that demonstrate consideration of biodiversity, or biodiversity conservation and enhancement</p>	2026	All
<p><b>Objective 4 Council owned Land and buildings</b> To consider the potential for Council owned land and buildings to conserve and enhance biodiversity</p>	<p><b>Council owned or managed land</b></p> <p><b>4.1</b> Identify which land owned or managed by the council is identified in the Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• areas that are of particular importance for biodiversity</li> <li>• areas that could become of particular importance for biodiversity' and the potential habitats identified by the strategy;</li> </ul>	2028/2029	Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside
	<p><b>4.2</b> Installation of more bollards at the seafront in appropriate locations to protect vegetation.</p>	On-going	Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside and Property Assets
	<p><b>4.3</b> When preparing the next Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, identify any areas of Council owned parks, amenity open spaces, cemeteries and closed churchyards that would be suitable for implementation of site-specific management plans to meet objectives within the KCC Local Nature</p>	Ongoing	Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside

Proposed Biodiversity Duty Objective	Updated actions Completed actions are summarised in the main report	Timescales	Department/service responsible Resource implications
	Recovery Strategy and / or Natural England (NE) Species Conservation Strategies and Protected Site Strategies.		
	<b>4.4</b> Recruitment of an open spaces officer to manage volunteer activity at DDC Parks and Open Spaces to manage biodiverse planting areas such as Kearsney Abbey and Russell Gardens.	2026	Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside
	<b>4.5</b> Continue to work with local stakeholders in identifying additional areas of Council owned amenity grassland that can be managed using fewer cuts per year, to encourage greater biodiversity.	2026 and on-going	Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside
	<b>4.6</b> When preparing the proposed tree strategy, consider opportunities for promoting biodiversity through management of trees on Council owned land, e.g. when possible, using a range of native species in any planting schemes.	2026	Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside
	<b>4.7</b> Carry out an audit of site-specific management plans of protected and designated sites in Dover District Council ownership, with the intention to identify any which require reviewing and/or where new management plans are required to increase positive conservation management.	2026	Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside and Planning and Development
	<b>4.8</b> Scope a feasibility study to identify suitable process for identifying habitat banks on Council landholdings in the District, and suitable areas for habitat creation and enhancement.	2027/2028	Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside
	<b>4.9</b> Undertake a review of Council landholding (including waterways) to assess potential suitability for providing off-site BNG funded through the sale of BNG units to developers.	On-going	Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside
	<b>4.10</b> White Cliffs Countryside Partnership to continue working to protect, enhance and promote biodiversity on the seven nature reserves it manages in Dover District.	On-going	White Cliffs Countryside Partnership
	<b>4.11</b> To identify site management / maintenance opportunities that will contribute to biodiversity enhancement / conservation (e.g. explore the installation of more bollards at the seafront in appropriate locations to protect vegetation).	2026 and on-going	Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside and Property Assets

Proposed Biodiversity Duty Objective	Updated actions Completed actions are summarised in the main report	Timescales	Department/service responsible Resource implications
	<b>Council owned or managed buildings</b>		
	4.12 Review current processes in relation to maintenance of buildings and sites to ensure biodiversity is being considered where necessary.	2026	Property Assets
	4.13 Consider potential for small scale habitat enhancements on Council owned buildings.	Ongoing	Property Assets
	4.14 Ensure biodiversity net gain is embedded in the early stages of new project delivery.	Ongoing	Housing, Place and Growth, Property Assets, Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside
<b>Objective 5</b>  <b>Partnerships, communities and volunteers</b>  <b>To promote (and identify opportunities for) biodiversity in the Council's work with partnerships, communities and volunteers, including engaging with the public and other stakeholders to educate, advise and raise awareness of biodiversity</b>	5.1 Existing White Cliffs Countryside Partnership activities to continue	Ongoing	Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside
	5.2 Continue engaging with the public to educate, advise and raise awareness of biodiversity.	Ongoing	Communications
	5.3 Provide information to housing tenants about garden wildlife and wildlife friendly gardening.	2026 /2027	Strategic Housing, Property Assets
	5.4 Use the housing tenants Annual Gardening competition as an opportunity to engage with residents about gardening for wildlife,	2026 /2027	Property Assets
	5.5 Provide information on the beach huts at Kingsdown to raise awareness about conservation and enhancement of vegetated shingle.	2026/2027	Property Assets
	5.6 Subject to securing funding, to install signage in appropriate coastal locations to educate visitor to protected areas.	2026/2027	Property Assets

Proposed Biodiversity Duty Objective	Updated actions Completed actions are summarised in the main report	Timescales	Department/service responsible Resource implications
	<b>5.7</b> Continue to support the work of the Kent Downs AONB unit to identify opportunities for improvements to nature in the Kent Downs National Landscape.	Ongoing	Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside Planning and Development
	<b>5.8</b> Existing Strategic Access and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) officer activities to continue and to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare an educational leaflet, including Codes of Conduct for Sandwich Bay</li> <li>• Oversee completion and publication of visitor and bird disturbance surveys</li> </ul> To continue expanding a local network of community groups	2026 and ongoing	Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside
	<b>5.9</b> To identify additional ways to help raise awareness of biodiversity, such as carrying information on wildlife friendly gardening or local wildlife volunteering opportunities and educational leaflets about Sandwich Bay on the Community Roots Van.	2026 / 2027	Community Development
	<b>5.10</b> To explore running biodiversity focused events with the Community Roots van, and in particular engage with the SAMMS officer at Sandwich Bay.	2026 / 2027	Community Development

# Appendix 1: Biodiversity Gain Information

12 February 2024 to 31 December 2025

## **Table of Contents**

This spreadsheet contains 8 worksheets.

Worksheet 1 covers information about the number of eligible planning permissions granted under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requiring biodiversity net gain

Worksheet 2 covers the overall expected gains and losses from biodiversity gain plans approved during the reporting period

Worksheet 3 covers the number of biodiversity gain plans approved during the reporting period that impact irreplaceable habitat

Worksheet 4 covers the number of biodiversity gain sites and biodiversity units delivered

Worksheet 5 covers a summary of whether approved development is meeting its monitoring requirements

Worksheet 6 covers the composition of gains split by area habitat type

Worksheet 7 covers the composition of gains split by hedgerow and line of trees type

Worksheet 8 covers the composition of gains split by watercourse type

**Eligible planning permissions granted under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requiring biodiversity net gain**

**This information can be manually collected from approved biodiversity gain plans or statutory metrics if you are not using a software package**

This worksheet contains one table.

This is Table 1.

<b>ID</b>	<b>Consented applications requiring net gains</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Proportion (%)</b>
A	Total number of planning permissions granted that require biodiversity net gain in the reporting period	45	Not applicable
B	Total number of planning permissions granted in the reporting period where an exemption to the biodiversity net gain condition applies	858	Not applicable
C	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period	6	Not applicable
D	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through on-site units only	5	83.33
E	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through off-site units only	0	0.00
F	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through statutory credits only	0	0.00
G	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through a combination of on-site and off-site units	0	0.00
H	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through a combination of on-site units and statutory credits	1	16.67
I	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through a combination of off-site units and statutory credits	0	0.00
J	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through a combination of on-site, off-site units and statutory credits	0	0.00

**Guidance - where to find/how to calculate the data**

A	
B	
C	
D	Biodiversity Gain Plan, question 4.6. For proportion divide the number by Table 1, Line C. Expressed as a percentage
E	Biodiversity Gain Plan, question 4.6. For proportion divide the number by Table 1, Line C. Expressed as a percentage
F	Biodiversity Gain Plan, question 4.11. For proportion divide the number by Table 1, Line C. Expressed as a percentage
G	Biodiversity Gain Plan, question 4.6. For proportion divide the number by Table 1, Line C. Expressed as a percentage
H	Biodiversity Gain Plan, question 4.6 and 4.11. For proportion divide the number by Table 1, Line C. Expressed as a percentage
I	Biodiversity Gain Plan, question 4.6 and 4.11. For proportion divide the number by Table 1, Line C. Expressed as a percentage
J	Biodiversity Gain Plan, question 4.6 and 4.11. For proportion divide the number by Table 1, Line C. Expressed as a percentage

**Overall expected gains and losses across all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period**

This worksheet contains one table.

This is Table 2.

<b>ID</b>	<b>Overall expected gains and losses</b>	<b>Area habitat</b>	<b>Hedgerow</b>	<b>Watercourse</b>
A	Total number of pre-development biodiversity units approved on-site	11.28	0.75	0.18
B	Total number of post-development biodiversity units approved on-site	12.77	3.70	0.18
C	Total net unit change in biodiversity units, on-site	1.50	2.95	0.00
D	Average percentage (%) change in biodiversity units, on-site	13.28	394.79	0.00
E	Total number of baseline biodiversity units approved off-site	0.00	0.00	0.00
F	Total number of post-intervention biodiversity units approved off-site	0.00	0.00	0.00
G	Total net unit change in biodiversity units, off-site	0.00	0.00	0.00
H	Average percentage (%) change in biodiversity units, off-site	0.00	0.00	0.00
I	Total number of biodiversity units offset using statutory credits	0.00	0.00	0.02
J	Total net unit change in biodiversity units (including any units offset using credits)	1.50	2.95	0.02
K	Average percentage (%) change (including statutory credits)	13.28	394.79	10.00

**Guidance - where to find/how to calculate the data**

- A Biodiversity Gain Plan, total 6.3 across all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period
- B Biodiversity Gain Plan, total 6.4 across all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period
- C Biodiversity Gain Plan, total 6.5 number of area/hedgerow/watercourse units across all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period
- D Table 2, line C divided by Table 2, line A expressed as a percentage
- E Biodiversity Gain Plan, total 7.4 across all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period
- F Biodiversity Gain Plan, total 7.5 across all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period
- G Biodiversity Gain Plan, total 7.6 number of area/habitat/watercourse units across all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period
- H Table 2, line G divided by Table 2 line E, expressed as a percentage
- I Biodiversity Gain Plan, total 8.2 across all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period
- J Sum of Table 2 line C+G+I
- K Table 2 line J divided by the sum of Table 2 line A+E, expressed as a percentage

### Impact on Irreplaceable Habitat

This worksheet contains one table.

This is Table 3

ID	Impact on irreplaceable habitat	Total	Proportion (%)
A	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period where the on-site change negatively impacts irreplaceable habitats	0	0.00

### Guidance - where to find/how to calculate the data

- A The number of applications selecting 'yes' on biodiversity gain plan 5.1. For proportion divide by Table 1 line C, expressed as a percentage

### Location of off-site biodiversity units

This worksheet contains one table.

This is Table 4

ID	Location of off-site biodiversity units	Total	Proportion (%)
A	Number of off-site biodiversity units located inside LPA boundary or NCA of impact site	0.00	0.00
B	Number of off-site biodiversity units located outside LPA or NCA of impact site, but in neighbouring LPA or NCA	0.00	0.00
C	Number of off-site biodiversity units located outside of LPA or NCA of impact site and neighbouring LPA or NCA	0.00	0.00

### Guidance - where to find/how to calculate the data

For 'Total' sum number of off-site biodiversity units in each category for all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period where off-site gains have been used. Category found in 'Off-site Habitat Baseline Tab', Number of biodiversity units found in 'Off-site gain site summary' tab

For 'Proportion (%)' should be calculated as such:  $((\text{Total (Column C)} / (\text{sum of totals in column C})) \times 100)$

### Results of monitoring biodiversity gains

This worksheet contains two tables.

This is Table 5

ID	Results of monitoring biodiversity gains where the LPA is part of the legal agreement	Total	Proportion (%)
A	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans including the delivery of 'significant' on-site gains		
B	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans that are meeting monitoring requirements and habitat delivery expectations for 'significant' on-site gains		
C	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans that are meeting monitoring requirements and habitat delivery expectations for 'significant' on-site gains		
D	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans that are failing to meet monitoring requirements for 'significant' on-site gains		
E	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans where the status of monitoring requirements is unknown for 'significant' on-site gains		
F	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans including the delivery of offsite gains, where the LPA are responsible for monitoring.		
G	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans that are meeting monitoring requirements and habitat delivery expectations for offsite gains where the LPA is responsible for monitoring		
H	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans that are meeting monitoring requirements but not meeting habitat delivery expectations for offsite gains where the LPA is responsible for monitoring		
I	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans that are failing to meet monitoring requirements for offsite gains where the LPA is responsible for monitoring		
J	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans where the status of monitoring requirements is unknown for offsite gains where the LPA is responsible for monitoring		

ID	Enforcement actions taken in the reporting period	Total	Proportion (%)
L	Number of enforcement actions taken in the reporting period associated with Biodiversity Net Gain policy		

ID	Tracking monitoring data/ manual monitoring reports/ internal monitoring system etc.	Free Text
K	Please describe the methods used to collect information on monitoring (e.g., use of digital software to collect and analyse monitoring data/ manual monitoring reports/ internal monitoring system etc.)	

#### Guidance - where to go to know to calculate the data

Proportion (%) should be calculated as such: ((Total (Table 5a) / Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period (Table 1, line C)) x 100)

NO MONITORING REQUIRED DURING REPORTING PERIOD

### Composition of biodiversity gains - areas

This worksheet contains one table.

This is Table 6

ID	Habitat Type - Area	Total biodiversity units at baseline	Total hectares at baseline	Total biodiversity units post - development	Total hectares post - development	Net change in biodiversity units	Net change in hectares
A	Cropland	0.48	0.24	0.00	0.00	-0.48	-0.24
B	Grassland	2.02	0.99	2.37	0.51	0.36	-0.48
C	Heathland and shrub	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.01	0.08	0.01
D	Lakes	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
E	Sparsely vegetated land	0.05	0.01	0.00	0.00	-0.05	-0.01
F	Urban	0.16	0.86	0.45	1.65	0.30	0.79
G	Wetland	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
H	Woodland and forest	1.83	0.46	2.88	0.42	1.04	-0.04
I	Intertidal sediment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
J	Coastal saltmarsh	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K	Rocky shore	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
L	Coastal lagoons	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
M	Intertidal hard structures	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
N	Watercourse footprint	Not applicable	0.00	Not applicable	0.00	Not applicable	0.00
O	Individual trees	6.74	0.69	6.99	0.92	0.25	0.23
	Total	11.28	3.25	12.77	3.51	1.50	0.26

### Guidance - where to find/how to calculate the data

For 'Total biodiversity units at baseline' column, see column D, rows 78-92 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting

For 'Total hectares at baseline' column, see column C, rows 78-92 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Total biodiversity units post-development' column, see column F, rows 78-92 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the

For 'Total hectares post-development' column, see column E, rows 78-92 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting

For 'Net change in biodiversity units' column, calculate by deducting 'Total biodiversity units at baseline' from 'Total biodiversity units post-development'.

For 'Net change hectares' column, calculate by deducting 'Total hectares at baseline' from 'Total hectares post-development'.

### Composition of biodiversity gains - hedgerows and lines of trees

This worksheet contains one table.

This is Table 7

ID	Habitat type - hedgerows and lines of trees	Total biodiversity units at baseline	Total kilometres at baseline	Total biodiversity units post - development	Total kilometres post - development	Net change in biodiversity units	Net change in kilometres
A	Species-rich native hedgerow with trees - associated with bank or ditch	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
B	Species-rich native hedgerow with trees	0.00	0.00	1.76	0.18	1.76	0.18
C	Species-rich native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
D	Native hedgerow with trees - associated with bank or ditch	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
E	Species-rich native hedgerow	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
F	Native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
G	Native hedgerow with trees	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
H	Ecologically valuable line of trees	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
I	Ecologically valuable line of trees - associated with bank or ditch	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
J	Native hedgerow	0.40	0.09	1.50	0.45	1.09	0.36
K	Line of trees	0.24	0.06	0.24	0.06	0.00	0.00
L	Line of trees - associated with bank or ditch	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
M	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	0.10	0.10	0.20	0.21	0.10	0.11
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>0.25</b>	<b>3.70</b>	<b>0.90</b>	<b>2.95</b>	<b>0.65</b>

#### Guidance - where to find/how to calculate the data

For 'Total biodiversity units at baseline' column, see column D, rows 140-152 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting

For 'Total kilometres at baseline' column, see column C, rows 140-152 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Total biodiversity units post-development' column, see column F, rows 140-152 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the

For 'Total kilometres post-development' column, see column E, rows 140-152 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting

For 'Net change in biodiversity units' column, calculate by deducting 'Total biodiversity units at baseline' from 'Total biodiversity units post-development'.

For 'Net change in kilometres' column, calculate by deducting 'Total kilometres at baseline' from 'Total kilometres post-development'.

### Composition of biodiversity gains - watercourses

This worksheet contains one table.

This is Table 8

ID	Habitat type - watercourse	Total biodiversity units at baseline	Total kilometers at baseline	Total biodiversity units post - development	Total kilometers post - development	Net change in biodiversity units	Net change in kilometers
A	Priority habitat	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
B	Other rivers and streams	0.18	0.05	0.18	0.05	0.00	0.00
C	Ditches	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
D	Canals	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
E	Culvert	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	<b>Total</b>	0.18	0.05	0.18	0.05	0.00	0.00

#### Guidance - where to find/how to calculate the data

For 'Total biodiversity units at baseline' column, see column D, rows 203-207 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Total kilometers at baseline' column, see column C, rows 203-207 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Total biodiversity units post-development' column, see column F, rows 203-207 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Total kilometers post-development' column, see column E, rows 203-207 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Net change biodiversity units' column, calculate by deducting 'Total biodiversity units at baseline' from 'Total biodiversity units post-development'.

For 'Net change in kilometers' column, calculate by deducting 'Total kilometers at baseline' from 'Total kilometers post-development'.